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PAGE 01

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REVIEWED by *Wm. Kelley* DATE *4/28/89*

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MILITARY ADDRESSEES ALSO FOR POLADS: PARIS ALSO FOR USDAO:
DEPARTMENT ALSO FOR NEA/PAB. MS. MILLIKAN: THE HAGUE FOR
A-JAM AND R-DAM

E.O. 12356: DECL: 2/9/93

TAGS: ASEC, MOPS, MCAP, PHUM, PINR, PINS, PROP, REF, UR, AF
SUBJECT: AFGHANISTAN SITUATION REPORT: FEBRUARY 2 THROUGH 8, 1987

REF: KABUL 187

3. SUMMARY: FOUR BOMBING INCIDENTS IN THE CAPITAL IN FIVE DAYS (TWO EXPLOSIONS AND TWO DEFUSED) CREATED A VERY TENSE ATMOSPHERE IN KABUL DURING THE PAST WEEK AND CAUSED IMPOSITION OF RIGOROUS SECURITY MEASURES. THE BOMBINGS, NONE OF WHICH TARGETTED SOVIET OR MAJOR DRA INSTALLATIONS, ARE UNEXPLAINED ALTHOUGH MOST KABUL RESIDENTS DISCOUNT MUJAHIDIN INVOLVEMENT. MAJOR BOMBING INCIDENTS ALSO OCCURRED IN JALALABAD AND KANDAHAR DURING THE WEEK. MEANWHILE IN PARWAN INTENSE FIGHTING CONTINUES, ESPECIALLY NEAR THE SALANG ROAD. CHRONIC FIGHTING IS ALSO REPORTED IN HERAT WHERE THE GOVERNMENT CONTROLS LITTLE OF THE PROVINCIAL CAPITAL, AND IN GHAZNI. IN POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS, PRIME MINISTER KESHTMAND IS IN MOSCOW WHERE HIS VISIT COINCIDES WITH THAT OF THE UN SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE DIEGO CORDOVEZ AND PAKISTANI FOREIGN MINISTER YAKUB KHAN. AT THE SAME TIME, DRA FOREIGN MINISTER ABDUL WAKIL WENT TO NEW DELHI IN AN UNPRECEDENTED BILATERAL VISIT. THE REGIME CONTINUED PRISON RELEASES IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITS AMNESTY DECREE. BY FAR THE LARGEST RELEASE THUS FAR (600 TO 800 PRISONERS) WAS FROM PUL-I-CHARKI. (THIS FIGURE, OBTAINED FROM JOURNALISTS ON THE SCENE, IS AT VARIANCE WITH THE DRA CLAIM OF 1300 RELEASED. END SUMMARY.

4. KABUL PYROTECHNICS:

SECURITY CONTINUED VERY TIGHT IN THE CAPITAL DURING THE WEEK, PROMPTED BY CONTINUING BOMB INCIDENTS (SEE PARA 3). DRA MILITARY MANNED VEHICLE CHECK POINTS IN THE OUTSKIRTS OF KABUL WHILE POLICE AND DRA MILITARY CONDUCTED DAY AND NIGHTTIME VEHICLE CHECKS THROUGHOUT THE CITY. ONLY IN SOUTHERN DARULAMAN DID SOVIET TROOPS CONDUCT CHECKS AND THEN ONLY AT NIGHT. SOVIET ARMOR WAS LESS VISIBLE THOUGH A FEW APC'S WERE SEEN AT MAJOR INTERSECTIONS AND AT OTHER KEY POINTS DURING THE WEEK, ESPECIALLY LATE IN THE EVENINGS. THE TIGHT SECURITY GENERATED ONE RUMOR, SOURCED TO EAST EUROPEAN DIPLOMATS, THAT THE CITY CURFEW, MOVED BACK TO MIDNIGHT THREE WEEKS AGO, MIGHT BE ADVANCED TO 2100.

-- FEBRUARY 2: AT 0745 DIPLOMATS HEARD A SERIES OF SHOTS FROM THE DIRECTION OF TAPE MARANJAN. DIPLOMATS ALSO REPORTED THREE EXPLOSIONS, PROBABLY FROM INCOMING ROCKETS, BETWEEN 2040 AND 2053.

-- FEBRUARY 3: DIPLOMATS NOTED RIFLE FIRE IN NORTHERN KABUL AT 1920. THREE TO FOUR EXPLOSIONS WERE HEARD IN NORTHERN

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KABUL AFTER 2200.

-- FEBRUARY 6: DIPLOMATS REPORTED A LCUD EXPLOSION IN
NORTHERN KABUL AT 0620. A SECOND EXPLOSION OCCURRED AT 0750
AND A THIRD AT 1145. BETWEEN 1035 AND 1105 DIPLOMATS HEARD
INTENSE FIRE FROM VARIOUS CALIBER WEAPONS, INCLUDING
ARTILLERY, HEAVY MACHINEGUNS AND POSSIBLY MORTARS, NORTH AND
NORTHWEST OF THE CITY. THE FIRING INDICATED AN EXCHANGE
BETWEEN TWO OR POSSIBLY THREE POINTS. SOME ARTILLERY TO THE
SOUTH WAS ALSO NOTED. HELICOPTERS WERE OBSERVED IN AN
APPARENT HUNTING MODE IN THE AREA AT THE TIME OF THE SHOOTING.

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MILITARY MOVEMENT IN THE KABUL AREA:

IGHTTIME AIRCRAFT ACTIVITY CONTINUED HEAVY THROUGH MOST OF
HE WEEK AND WAS PARTICULARLY HEAVY DURING THE EVENING
F FEBRUARY 3-4. A DIPLOMAT, SOURCING AN AFGHAN WHO LIVES
N SOUTHERN KABUL, REPORTED THAT SINCE APPROXIMATELY MID-
JANUARY, THERE HAS BEEN A PATTERN OF MI-8 HELICOPTER TRANSITS
BETWEEN KABUL AIRPORT AND A SOVIET BASE SOUTHWEST OF THE CITY
A DISTANCE OF 14KMS). THE DAILY FLIGHTS AVERAGE ABOUT
10-15 LOW-FLYING HELICOPTERS (SEE COMMENT PARA 23.) WHILE
L-76 ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES CONTINUED TO AVERAGE THREE TO
FOUR PER DAY. PARACHUTE FLARE SERVICE (USED TO PROTECT AGAINST
SURFACE-TO-AIR MISSILES) DECREASED MARKEDLY. CONVOY ACTIVITY
AS DOWN ALTHOUGH IT APPEARED TO PICK UP TOWARD THE END OF THE
330.

- FEBRUARY 3: AT 1140 FOUR MI-6'S FLEW FROM THE WEST TO
KARUL AIRPORT. AT 1315 FOUR MI-6'S AND TWO MI-8'S FOLLOWED
A SIMILAR COURSE.

-- FEBRUARY 4: AT 2030 AN IL-76 MADE AN UNUSUAL NIGHTTIME DEPARTURE. WITHOUT LIGHTS.

(3) (VEHICULAR)

(3) (VEHICULAR)
-- FEBRUARY 3. AT 1715 A DIPLOMAT OBSERVED SIX AFGHAN-
CREWED BMP'S MOVING WEST ON THE JALALABAD ROAD IN THE
DIRECTION OF THE CAPITAL.

-- FEBRUARY 4: AT 0550 A LARGE DRA CONVOY, CONSISTING MOSTLY OF FUEL AND COVERED TRUCKS AND ESCORTED BY BTR-152'S, WAS OBSERVED MOVING WEST THROUGH KABUL, PROBABLY TO THE GHAZNI ROAD.

-- FEBRUARY 5: A DIPLOMAT OBSERVED A NORTH-BOUND COLUMN ASSEMBLING ON THE SALANG ROAD AT 1135. IT INCLUDED APPROXIMATELY 40 COVERED TRUCKS, 30 FUEL TRUCKS AND WAS ESCORTED BY APPROXIMATELY TEN APC'S AND TEN TRUCK-MOUNTED ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS.

-- FEBRUARY 6: AT 1730 A PATROL MOVED EAST ON THE AIRPORT ROAD (TOWARD THE AIRPORT). IT INCLUDED THREE BTR'S, AND A SINGLE TRUCK-MOUNTED ZU-23.

-- FEBRUARY 7: AT 0720 A SOVIET CONVOY OF OVER 90 VEHICLES, CONSISTING PRIMARILY OF FUEL TANKERS AND AMMO-BEARING FLATBEDS, LEFT KABUL ON THE GHAZNI ROAD. TRUCKS BORE THE UNIT NUMBERS 1312 OR 1043 AND WERE ESCORTED BY TRUCK-MOUNTED ZU-23'S.

-- FEBRUARY 8: AT 0605 IN EXCESS OF 20 SOVIET VEHICLES WERE NOTED MOVING FROM A STAGING AREA NEAR THE JUNCTION OF SATANG AND PERIMETER ROADS, HEADING EAST ON PERIMETER ROAD. MOST OF THE TRUCKS BORE AN AIRBORNE INSIGNIA.

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PT03009 PAGE 02

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-- COMBAT IN THE PROVINCES --

6. KABUL: (A) THREE BOMBS, ONE WHICH EXPLODED AND TWO WHICH WERE DEFUSED
• PLUS THE FEBRUARY 1 CAR BOMB IN SHARE
NAU (REFTEL) PROMPTED VERY TIGHT SECURITY AND A HIGH DEGREE OF TENSION IN THE CITY. ON FEBRUARY 2, A LARGE BOMB WAS DISCOVERED AND DEFUSED IN SHARE NAU PARK IN AN AREA BETWEEN A CINEMA AND THE CUHAN EMBASSY. AT 1700 ON FEBRUARY 4, A SMALL BOMB WAS FOUND AND DEFUSED NEAR THE RESIDENCE OF A UNICEF OFFICIAL (CUHAN NATIONALITY) AND THE PAKISTANI EMBASSY RESIDENCE IN WAZIR AKBAR KHAN. ON FEBRUARY 6 A BOMB EXPLODED IN THE CHILSI TOON AREA OF KABUL, DESTROYING TWO MILITARY VEHICLES AND ONE OTHER VEHICLE. THREE AFGHANS WERE KILLED. LOCAL RESIDENTS AND DIPLOMATS HAVE NOTED THE SEEMING RANDOM NATURE OF THE BOMBING INCIDENTS, WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN TARGETTED AGAINST MAJOR SOVIET OR DRA FACILITIES. MOST AFGHANS DISCOUNT THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE BOMBINGS, WHICH APPEAR INTENDED TO CAUSE HIGH CIVILIAN CASUALTIES, ARE THE WORK OF THE MUJAHIDIN. THEY SUSPECT THE BOMBING WAVE IS THE RESULT OF INCREASING FACTIONALISM WITHIN THE PARTY AND REGIME. FINALLY, ACCORDING TO AN UNCONFIRMED REPORT FROM AN AFGHAN WHO RESIDES IN THE AREA OF THE FEBRUARY 1 BLAST, THE EXPLOSION WAS CAUSED BY 25 POUNDS OF PLASTIQUE AND THE DEATH TOLL IS NOW 13.
(B) AN AFGHAN SOURCE REPORTS THAT ON THE EVENING OF FEBRUARY 5 A KHAD OFFICIAL (MINISTRY OF STATE SECURITY) WAS SHOT AND KILLED IN THE GALA SHADA AREA (WESTERN KABUL).

(C) A USUALLY RELIABLE AFGHAN SOURCE REPORTS THAT TWO DRA SOLDIERS WERE KILLED IN A MINE EXPLOSION IN THE PAGHMAN AREA, FEBRUARY 5.

(D) A FREQUENT AFGHAN SOURCE REPORTS HEAVY FIGHTING NEAR CHAR ASIAR (ON THE LOGAR ROAD, 15 KMS SOUTH OF THE CAPITAL).

7. NANGARHAR:

(A) AN EYEWITNESS HAS DESCRIBED TO A DIPLOMAT THE EXPLOSION OF A MASSIVE CAR BOMB IN JALALABAD AT 1920 ON FEBRUARY 4. THE BLAST, WHICH WAS TARGETTED AGAINST THE CITY RADIO AND TELEVISION CENTER, DESTROYED MANY NEARBY SHOPS AND BLEW OUT WINDOWS AND DOORS IN A WIDE AREA. SEPARATE AFGHAN SOURCE, IN JALALABAD AT THE TIME, REPORTED THAT BEFORE THE BLAST MUJAHIDIN WARNED PEOPLE IN THE AREA OF THE IMPENDING EXPLOSION AND THAT THERE WAS AN EVACUATION OF "FRIENDS."

(B) ACCORDING TO AN AFGHAN SOURCE, MUJAHIDIN ROCKETED THE JALALABAD AIRPORT ON FEBRUARY 1. DRA FORCES IN THE AREA RETALIATED WITH ARTILLERY.

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PAGE 01

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8. PARWAN:

ACCORDING TO SEVERAL AFGHANS, HEAVY FIGHTING, PARTICULARLY IN THE CHARIKAR-JABAL OS SARAJ AREA, CONTINUED THIS WEEK WITH MAJOR FIGHTING ON FEBRUARY 4 WHICH RESULTED IN THE DEATH OF 4 SOVIET TROOPS, 30 DRA AND 4 MUJAHIDIN. A RELIABLE DIPLOMAT REPORTS THAT DURING THE FIRST WEEK OF FEBRUARY MUJAHIDIN TARGETTED THE JABAL OS SARAJ POLICE STATION IN AN EVENING ROCKET ATTACK. THE ROCKETS MISSED, HOWEVER, DESTROYING SEVEN NEARBY SHOPS. AN AFGHAN MERCHANT SOURCE REPORTS THAT BY FAR THE MOST DANGEROUS PORTION OF THE SALANG ROAD FROM KABUL TO HAIPATAN IS THE 45 KM SEGMENT BETWEEN CHARIKAR AND THE SOUTHERN TERMINUS OF THE SALANG TUNNEL. ELSEWHERE IN PARWAN, A USUALLY RELIABLE AFGHAN SOURCE REPORTS THAT ON FEBRUARY 1 IN THE PANJSHIR SOVIET TROOPS EXECUTED 8 MUJAHIDIN PRISONERS.

9. KANDAHAR:

REGIME MEDIA CARRIED ACCOUNTS FEBRUARY 7 CLAIMING THAT A LARGE BOMB EXPLODED IN A PLACE OF ISLAMIC PILGRIMAGE. REPORTEDLY THERE WERE NO FATALITIES. SEPARATELY, A DIPLOMAT OF UNTESTED RELIABILITY STATES THAT MUJAHIDIN UNITS ROCKETED KANDAHAR AIRPORT ON JANUARY 27, DESTROYING SEVERAL SOVIET HELICOPTERS. FINALLY, SOURCES OUTSIDE OF AFGHANISTAN REPORT THAT THE NUMBER OF INJURED AFGHANS COMING TO THE ICRC HOSPITAL IN QUETTA DURING THE MONTHS OF DECEMBER AND JANUARY WAS THE HIGHEST IN MEMORY. HOSPITAL TENTS WERE SET UP TO DEAL WITH THE OVERFLOW AT THE FIFTY-BED FACILITY. THE INJURED INCLUDED MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN. (COMMENT: THE INFLUX MAY REFLECT THE INTENSE FIGHTING THAT OCCURRED IN THE KANDAHAR AREA IN NOVEMBER AND WHICH HAS SINCE CONTINUED INTERMITTENTLY, EVEN WITHIN THE CITY. THE BOMBING AND STRAFING OF URBAN KANDAHAR ON DECEMBER 8 (REPORTED PREVIOUSLY) MIGHT ALSO ACCOUNT FOR SOME OF THE INCREASED FLOW OF AFGHAN CASUALTIES. KANDAHAR RESIDENTS HAVE TOLD US IN THE PAST THAT THE ONLY MEDICAL FACILITIES AVAILABLE TO THEM IN THE EVENT OF SERIOUS INJURY OR ILLNESS ARE IN PAKISTAN. END COMMENT).

10. HERAT:

A WOUNDED SOLDIER FROM HERAT REPORTEDLY TOLD A REGULAR AFGHAN SOURCE THAT HE AND 15 TO 20 COMRADES WERE EVACUATED FROM HERAT CITY ON JANUARY 26 FOLLOWING? AVY FIGHTING IN THE CITY. AN AFGHAN WITH CLOSE CONTACTS IN HERAT REPORTS THE SOVIETS AND THE REGIME CURRENTLY CONTROL ONLY THE GOVERNMENT CENTER IN SHARE NAU AND THE BAGH-I-SHAH AREA IN NORTHERN HERAT. THE REST OF THE CITY IS EITHER UNDER MUJAHIDIN CONTROL OR IS CONTESTED.

11. GHAZNI:

A RELIABLE AFGHAN CONTACT REPORTED THAT MUJAHIDIN FORCES
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ATTACKED A SOVIET CONVOY ON FEBRUARY 1 IN THE SHASH GAU AREA (33°45'N 68°33'E). DESTROYING TWO MILITARY VEHICLES WITH MANY SOVIET CASUALTIES. THE SOURCE CLAIMED THAT ON THE SAME DAY MUJAHIDIN ATTACKED DRA FORCES WITHIN THE BALA HISSAR IN GHAZNI CITY AND THAT ON JANUARY 28 THREE SOVIETS WERE KILLED IN THE CITY WHEN AN EXPLOSIVE DEVICE WAS THROWN INTO THE JEEP IN WHICH THEY WERE RIDING. A SEPARATE AFGHAN SOURCE OF UNTESTED RELIABILITY REPORTS HEAVY FIGHTING CURRENTLY IN THE SHARON AREA (WESTERN GHAZNI NEAR THE PAKTIA BORDER).

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11. ORUZGAN:

 MUJAHIDIN FORCES ATTACKED THE PROVINCIAL AIRPORT AT TARIN
 KOWT (32°52'N 65°38'E) IN LATE JANUARY, ACCORDING TO A
 DIPLOMAT SOURCE OF UNTESTED RELIABILITY.

12. BAGHLAN:

 THE SAME DIPLOMATIC SOURCE REPORTED HEAVY FIGHTING AT TAKHAR
 (36°30'N 69°30'E) ON JANUARY 30.

13. BALKH:

 A RECENT WESTERN VISITOR TO MAZAR-I-SHARIF DESCRIBED
 THE ATMOSPHERE AS QUIET BUT TENSE. ACCORDING TO THE VISITOR'S
 ESCORTS, AFTER 1700 ANYONE WHO MIGHT BE MISTAKEN FOR A SOVIET
 RISKED BEING ATTACKED BY MUJAHIDIN, EVEN IN THE CENTER OF
 THE CITY. MUJAHIDIN REGULARLY VISIT THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE
 CITY SEEKING SUPPORT FROM LOCAL RESIDENTS. THE VISITOR
 NOTED THAT WHILE DINING WITH SENIOR LOCAL OFFICIALS SECURITY
 PERSONNEL CAREFULLY SCREENED MOUNDS OF FOOD WITH A METAL
 DETECTOR BEFORE IT WAS BROUGHT TO THE TABLE.

14. LAGHMAN:

 OVER THE JANUARY 31-FEBRUARY 1 WEEKEND, ACCORDING TO
 AN AFGHAN SOURCE, TWO HELICOPTERS WERE SHOT DOWN IN THE
 NAGHLU AREA, JUST WEST OF THE SOPUBI DAM.

15. WARDAK:

 A RELIABLE AFGHAN SOURCE REPORTED THAT MUJAHIDIN FORCES
 STAGED COORDINATED ATTACKS ON FOUR DRA POSTS IN THE
 SANGLAKA AREA (34°32'N 68°40'E) ON JANUARY 30.

16. LOGAR:

 ACCORDING TO A RELIABLE DIPLOMATIC SOURCE, IN JANUARY 31
 FIGHTING BETWEEN THE MUJAHIDIN AND DRA FORCES AT
 KOLANGAR (34°02'N 69°01'E) THREE DRA TROOPS AND 2 CIVILIANS
 WERE KILLED. AN UNCONFIRMED AFGHAN-SOURCED REPORT CONTENOS
 THAT DRA FORCES HAVE BEGUN EXECUTING CAPTURED PRISONERS IN
 LOGAR.

17. MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS:

 (A) A RELIABLE DIPLOMAT, QUOTING MUJAHIDIN SOURCES, CLAIMED
 THAT DURING THE FIRST WEEK OF FEBRUARY MUJAHIDIN DOWNED
 TEN SOVIET AND DRA AIRCRAFT.

(B) DIPLOMATS HAVE NOTED NEW CONSTRUCTION AT THE PRINCIPAL
 SOVIET MILITARY HOSPITAL IN KABUL. AT LEAST 16 NEW PREFAB
 CUBICLES WERE SET UP ON THE HOSPITAL GROUNDS DURING THE
 WEEK.

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PT04549 PAGE 03

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(C) ON FEBRUARY 3 AFGHAN AND DIPLOMATIC SOURCES NOTED
THE DEPARTURE BY AIR OF APPROXIMATELY 150 DRA OFFICERS FOR
MOSCOW.

(D) DIPLOMATS HAVE NOTED AN INCREASED USE OF DOGS BY SOVIET
TROOPS FOR PERIMETER PATROL AND VEHICLE INSPECTION.

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18. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS:

(A) DRA PRIME MINISTER KESHTMAND FLEW TO MOSCOW FOR FEBRUARY 9-10 TALKS THERE. HIS VISIT COINCIDES WITH THAT OF UNSYG SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE CORDOVEZ AND, REPORTEDLY WITH THAT OF PAKISTAN FOREIGN MINISTER YAKUB KHAN, WHO IS EXPECTED TO EXTEND HIS VISIT TO MOSCOW THROUGH THE FEBRUARY 9-10 PERIOD. MEANWHILE, DRA FOREIGN MINISTER WAKIL LEFT FOR AN APPARENTLY UNPRECEDENTED (SINCE THE 1979 SOVIET INVASION) FOREIGN MINISTERIAL-BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS IN INDIA.

(B) AN AFGHAN MEDICAL SOURCE REPORTS A RISING NUMBER OF UNEXPLAINED KILLINGS OF AFGHAN AND SOME SOVIET OFFICIALS.

(C) A RELIABLE DIPLOMAT REPORTS THAT DEFENSE MINISTER MOHAMMED RAFIE SHORTLY WILL BE PROMOTED FROM MAJOR GENERAL TO LIEUTENANT GENERAL.

19. HUMAN RIGHTS DEVELOPMENTS:

(A) THE REGIME ANNOUNCED PRISONER RELEASES IN FOUR PROVINCES DURING THE WEEK. BY FAR THE LARGEST WAS FROM PUL-I-CHARKI WHERE WESTERN JOURNALISTS REPORTED THAT BETWEEN 605 AND 800 PRISONERS WERE RELEASED (VICE THE REGIME CLAIM OF 1300). LOW LEVEL OFFICIALS AT PUL-I-CHARKI SAID THAT TWO OR THREE MORE RELEASES FROM PUL-I-CHARKI MIGHT BE STAGED IN COMING MONTHS. FAR SMALLER RELEASES WERE REPORTED IN THE LOCAL MEDIA IN PALKH, JAUZJAN, FARAH AND NIMROZ. (THE REGIME CLAIMED A TOTAL OF 210 PRISONERS RELEASED IN THESE PROVINCES.)

(B) ONE RECENT RELEASEE NOTED TO A DIPLOMAT THAT HE HAD BEEN IMPRISONED FOR NINE MONTHS BECAUSE HIS SON HAD DEFECTED FROM REGIME FORCES.

20. RECONCILIATION:

(A) KABUL MEDIA REPORTED THAT A SENIOR RECONCILIATION COMMISSION OFFICIAL FROM KANDAHAR HAD BEEN ABDUCTED AND ANOTHER HAD BEEN ASSASSINATED: A MAN NAMED INAYATULLAH FROM NANGARHAR PROVINCE.

(B) THE DRA HAS SOUGHT THE COOPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF TURKEY IN THE PROMPT TRANSPORT OF AFGHAN REFUGEES IN TURKEY WHO WISH TO RETURN TO AFGHANISTAN. (COMMENT: THE DRA IS PROBABLY REFERRING TO SEVERAL THOUSAND KIRGHIZ NOMADS FROM THE WAKHAN CORRIDOR WHO FLED TO PAKISTAN AND SUBSEQUENTLY WERE RESETTLED VOLUNTARILY IN EASTERN TURKEY. FROM ALL REPORTS THE KIRGHIZ ARE THRIVING IN THEIR NEW HOME AND ARE NOT KNOWN TO HAVE EXPRESSED ANY DESIRE TO RETURN TO AFGHANISTAN AT THIS TIME. END COMMENT).

21. MEDICAL DEVELOPMENTS:

(A) THE DRA HAS INFORMED THE OFFICE OF UNICEF IN KABUL THAT:

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PTC2957 PAGE 03

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THERE ARE 31,000 CASES ON MALARIA IN THE CAPITAL. VIRTUALLY
ALL OF THE CASES ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE MIGRATED HERE FROM
AREAS OUTSIDE THE CITY. THE MALARIA THREAT IN KABUL
TRADITIONALLY IS REGARDED AS LOW.

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(1) DURING THE FIRST WEEK OF FEBRUARY, ACCORDING TO A USUALLY RELIABLE AFGHAN SOURCE, 16 INFANTS DIED IN THE HOSPITAL IN SHAH NAU. THE DEATHS REPORTEDLY RESULTED FROM A POWER FAILURE AND ABSENCE OF AN ALTERNATIVE SOURCE OF POWER WHICH CAUSED THE DEATH FROM EXPOSURE OF THE INFANTS.

2. KABUL MEDIA:

 -- FEBRUARY 2: KABUL MEDIA, REPORTING ON THE CAR BOMB EXPLOSION NEAR THE INDIAN EMBASSY ON FEBRUARY 1, ALLEGED THAT THE PERPETRATORS WERE "ENEMIES OF AFGHANISTAN AND INDIA, SEEKING TO THWART FRIENDLY RELATIONS."

-- FEBRUARY 3: IN AN INTERVIEW WITH A PAKISTANI JOURNALIST PORA GENERAL SECRETARY NAJIB SAID THAT THE PARTY VISUALIZED A "FREE, NON-ALIGNED AND NEUTRAL COUNTRY. THE SAME DAY THE MEDIA CARRIED REPORTS THAT DURING THE WEEK THE SARANDOI FOULI "262 KGS OF POISONOUS MATERIALS AND EXPLOSIVES" IN A TRUCK IN KABUL.

-- FEBRUARY 4: A KABUL MEDIA ANNOUNCEMENT REPORTED "THE SECOND GROUP OF SOLDIERS OF THE REVOLUTION" (DRAWN FROM PARTY ORGANIZATIONS IN KABUL) LEFT FOR ONE OF THE FRONTIER PROVINCES TO JOIN BORDE BRIGADES.

23. NOT TO BE BRIEFED TO PRESS:

 AIR MOVEMENT IN THE KABUL AREA SINCE EARLY JANUARY HAS BEEN UNUSUAL IN SEVERAL RESPECTS: ARRIVAL AND IN SOME INSTANCES DEPARTURE OF IL-76 AIRCRAFT PROTECTED BY PARACHUTE CLUSTER FLARES (EMPLOYED TO DEFLECT HEAT-SEEKING MISSILES) HAS PROMPTED SPECULATION REGARDING THE CARGO OF THESE FLIGHTS, INCLUDING CONJECTURE THAT THE AIRCRAFT MAY BE CARRYING TROOPS. SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASED NIGHT AIR ACTIVITY BY PROP TRANSPORTS (COINCIDING WITH THE UNUSUAL IL-76 ACTIVITY) COULD SUGGEST MOVEMENT OF NEW EQUIPMENT OR TROOPS FROM KABUL TO PROVINCIAL BASES. A PATTERN OF MI-8 MOVEMENT ON SHORT HOPS (14 KM) FROM KABUL AIRPORT TO SPRAWLING SOVIET BASES SOUTH OF THE CITY (PARA 5,) ALSO COULD REFLECT MOVEMENT OF NEWLY ARRIVING TROOPS TO THESE BASES WHICH ARE LARGELY OUT OF THE RANGE OF OBSERVATION BY DIPLOMATS. EALUM
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